Inter-linking of rivers

862. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that senior experts and experienced persons of national and international repute raised doubts regarding the desirability and viability of inter-linking of rivers irrespective of the merits and benefits of the projects;

(b) whether the project has been presented as panacea for all conceivable ills;

(c) how the project will be prevented from rampant corruption and lucrative kick-backs in the process of implementation; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that instances of corruption are treated as mere exceptions and taken for granted that they are inevitable side effects of development?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Interlinking of River (ILR) is such a project which arouses interest in experts, planners and general public alike. It is but natural that there is a difference of opinion among experts on this proejct. However, in general, the ILR programme is welcomed by Experts and States as a long term solution for the optimum development of water resources in the country.

(b) The Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR) (erstwhile Ministry of Irrigation) and Central Water Commission (CWC) formulated a National Perspective Plan (NPP) for optimal development of water resources in 1980 envisaging interbasin transfer of water from surplus basins to deficit basins/areas. National Water Development Agency (NWDA) was set up under the MoWR in 1982 for carrying out various technical studies to establish the feasibility of the proposals of NPP and to give concrete shape to it. Based on various studies conducted, NWDA has identified 30 links under NPP (16 Peninsular and 14 Himalayan) for preparation of

Reports. NWDA has prepared Feasibility Reports (FRs) for 14 links under Peninsular Component and 2 links under Himalayan Component (Indian portion). Preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) for one priority link *viz.*, Ken-Betwa link has been taken up by NWDA after signing of a tripartite agreement between the Government of India and concerned States of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh on 25.08.2005. Implementation of inter-basin water transfer proposals depends upon consensus and cooperation of the concerned States. No interlinking project under NPP is under implementation.

(c) and (d) In view of the above, do not arise.

MoU between Indian and Chinese scientists on rivers

863. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Federation and the Beijing based Chinese Academy of Sciences signed a Memorandum of Understanding in New Delhi in December, 2006;

(b) if so, whether under the agreement a team of India and Chinese scientists would undertake a joint expedition in the Himalayas to find out the exact source of two of Asia's biggest rivers, the Brahmaputra and the Sutlej which are believed to orginate from Mount Kailash in Tibet and trace their exact source;

(c) if so, whether the experts of both the countries have submitted their report; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Indian Mountaineering Foundation and Chinese Academy of Science was signed on 21st December, 2006.